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RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 3415
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 3231
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RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000045

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/PD, EAP/RSP, S/CT
NSC FOR E.PHU

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [PTER](#) [ID](#)
SUBJECT: CENTRAL JAVA RAMPS UP FOR APRIL ELECTIONS

REF: A. JAKARTA 24
[1](#)B. 08 JAKARTA 1517 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Pol/C and Pol/FSN visited Central Java, Indonesia's third-largest province by population, January 8-9. Contacts were focused on the campaign for the April national legislative elections. The general view is that the opposition Indonesian Party of Democratic Struggle (PDI-P) will do well in the province, taking advantage of adverse economic conditions. Partai Demokrat, President Yudhoyono's party, however, is gaining traction (in line with recent national opinion polls). Pol/C also visited the Indonesian-Australian Jakarta Center for Law Enforcement Cooperation and held an outreach event on the U.S. presidential transition with a group of Rotarians. END SUMMARY.

VISIT TO SEMARANG

[1](#)2. (U) Pol/C and Pol FSN visited Semarang, the capital of Central Java, January 8-9. Central Java, with about 35 million inhabitants, is the third most populous province in Indonesia and Semarang--with over 1.6 million people--is the fifth-largest city. Pol/C met Semarang Mayor Sukawi Sutarip who said he would like Semarang to have a Sister City relationship with a U.S. city. He noted that Semarang has such a link with Brisbane, Australia, a relationship which he characterized as "active and fruitful." Pol/C replied that he would look into this request. (Note: Jakarta has a Sister City relationship with Los Angeles and Bandung with Fort Worth, among Indonesian cities with such links.)

OPPOSITION PARTY OPTIMISTIC

[1](#)3. (C) Political contacts were focused on preparations for Indonesia's national legislative elections which are scheduled to be held on April 9. The general view of the horse race at this time is that Indonesia's main opposition party, the PDI-P, is doing well in Central Java. Provincial Governor Bibit Waluyo, a member of the PDI-P, told Pol/C on January 9 that the party--which has a populist/leftist-tinged

economic platform--was underscoring in its campaign the problems of rising prices and the area's relatively high rate of unemployment/underemployment. Waluyo said the PDI-P planned to press economic issues during the campaign in an effort to tar President Yudhoyono's administration with "failing to help the average Indonesian."

¶4. (C) PDI-P also benefits because it has traditionally been strong in Central Java and has an impressive organizational network there. In comments echoed by other contacts, Rukma Setiabudhi, a local PDI-P politician, predicted that the PDI-P would run strong in Central Java, and that party leader and presidential candidate Megawati Sukarnoputri would also perform strongly.

PRESIDENT'S PARTY ON THE UPSWING

¶5. (C) In the meantime, Partai Demokrat (PD)--in line with recent national polls--is also doing well. In a January 8 meeting, Alvin Lie, a Semarang-based parliamentarian for the National Mandate Party (PAN), admitted to Pol/C that PD seemed to be on the upswing -- "A local poll I commissioned in my constituency showed that PD has come up in recent weeks." Contacts attributed PD's gains to an effective TV advertisement campaign and also to President Yudhoyono's general popularity. No one predicted that PD would actually become the dominant party in Central Java, but noted that--if its momentum continued--the party could finish second or third there behind the PDI-P. Such a showing in Central Java would auger well for the party's national standing.

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AN ACTIVE ANTI-TERROR FACILITY

¶6. (C) Pol/C also stopped at the Semarang-based Jakarta Center for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC). In a January 8 meeting, Indonesian Executive Director Brigadier General Adjie Ramdja told Pol/C that the facility--which was established after the Bali bombings of October 2002--had held over 50 training modules in 2008. The facility had trained over 1,000 law enforcement personnel in crisis response, forensics, informant handling, financial investigations, etc., in 2009. These personnel were mostly Indonesian. Australian Director Don Craill of the Australian Federal Police said JCLEC continued to attract many course participants from ASEAN countries and hoped to attract more in 2009. Pol/C briefed Ramdja and Craill on an anti-terrorism training module that the USG would be co-sponsoring with Australia, New Zealand and Canada at JCLEC in February.

OUTREACH WITH ROTARIANS

¶7. (U) Pol/C spoke January 8 at an outreach event held for local members of Rotary International. Pol/C reviewed U.S.-Indonesian relations and the presidential transition process. The Rotarians were excited about the inauguration on January 20 and prospects for the next U.S. administration. As part of their service orientation, they asked Pol/C whether the USG could help a number of assistance projects--including the construction of safe wells--that Rotary is sponsoring in Central Java. Pol/C said Mission would review the project proposals.

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